LISTING OF CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) An endoscope system comprising:

a voice input unit which inputs voice in a natural phrase;

a voice and character converting means which recognizes the voice inputted and converts the inputted voice into character data;

a monitoring unit which monitors comparison data having a previously stored hierarchal structure and command character trains ~~for a plurality of devices~~ that are hierarchized according to the comparison data, the comparison data and command character trains being ~~and are previously~~ stored in a memory in a system controller for controlling the plurality of devices, and the character data that is converted by the voice and character converting means;

an executing unit which executes an instruction previously allocated to the combination of the command character trains, upon detecting, in the converted character data, the command character train from the plurality of command character trains for a predetermined time interval in accordance with the preset comparison data ~~hierarchy~~;

a verification requesting means for issuing an audible verification request when the instruction is predetermined to require verification prior to execution; and

comparison data storing means which hierarchically prestores comparison data to identify the hierarchy in execution of the instruction.

2. (Original) The endoscope system according to Claim 1, wherein the plurality of devices comprise an electric cautery device.

3. (Original) The endoscope system according to Claim 2, wherein the command character trains include character trains which designate a plurality of output formats of the electric cautery device.

4. (Original) The endoscope system according to Claim 3, wherein the character trains which designate the plurality of output formats of the electric cautery device include an output system designating group, an incision mode designating group, an incision output designating group, a clotting mode designating group, and a clotting output designating group.

5. (Original) The endoscope system according to Claim 1, wherein the plurality of devices include a gas insufflator.

6. (Original) The endoscope system according to Claim 5, wherein the command character trains include character trains which designate a plurality of output formats of the gas insufflator.

7. (Original) The endoscope system according to Claim 6, wherein the character trains which designate the plurality of output formats of the gas insufflator include an air-supply on/off designating group, a set pressure designating group, an air-supply mode designating group, and a set fluid amount designating group.

8. (Original) The endoscope system according to Claim 4, wherein the plurality of devices further include a gas insufflator.

9. (Original) The endoscope system according to Claim 8, wherein the command character trains include character trains which designate a plurality of output formats of the gas insufflator.

10. (Original) The endoscope system according to Claim 9, wherein the character trains which designate the plurality of output formats of the gas insufflator include an air-supply on/off designating group, a set pressure designating group, an air-supply mode designating group, and a set fluid amount designating group.

11. (Original) The endoscope system according to Claim 1, wherein the executing unit executes the instruction allocated to the combination of the command character trains and thereafter displays the executed result of the instruction.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) A device control method comprising:

a voice input step of inputting voice in a natural phrase;

a voice and character converting step of recognizing the voice inputted and converting the inputted voice into character data;

a monitoring step of monitoring comparison data having a previously stored hierarchal structure and command character trains ~~for a plurality of devices~~ that are hierarchized according to the comparison data, the comparison data and command character trains being ~~and are previously~~ stored in a memory in a system controller for controlling a plurality of devices and the character data that is converted by the voice and character converting step;

an executing step of executing an instruction previously allocated to the combination of the command character trains, upon detecting, in the converted character data, the command character train from the plurality of command character trains for a predetermined time interval in accordance with the preset comparison data ~~hierarchy~~;

a verification requesting step for issuing an audible verification request when the instruction is predetermined to require verification prior to execution; and

a comparison data storing step for hierarchically prestoring comparison data to identify the hierarchy in execution of the instruction.

14. (Original) The device control method according to Claim 13, further comprising: a display step of displaying an executed result of the instruction after executing the instruction allocated to the combination of the command character trains in the executing step.

15. (Canceled)

16. (Currently Amended) An endoscope system comprising one or a plurality of devices, the endoscope system comprising:

voice input means which inputs voice in a natural phrase;

voice and character converting means which recognizes the voice inputted and converts the inputted voice into character data;

a system controller which controls the plurality of devices;

monitoring means which monitors comparison data having a previously stored hierarchal structure and command character trains ~~for a plurality of devices~~ that are hierarchized according to the comparison data, the comparison data and command character trains being ~~and are previously~~ in a memory in the system controller and the character data that is converted by the voice and character converting means; and

executing means which executes an instruction previously allocated to the combination of the command character trains, upon detecting, in the converted character data, the command character train from the plurality of command character trains for a predetermined time interval in accordance with the preset comparison data ~~hierarchy~~.